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this country feels himself to a certain extent aggrieved. Whilst ignorance on music and musical matters amongst the majority of men professing or patronising other arts and sciences remains simply passive, we may continue to look upon it more in sorrow than in anger; but when it takes the form of an active demonstration of conscious superiority, it is time for all who feel the true mission of music in the world to speak out boldly and decisively in its defence. The Athenæum Club ranks amongst its members many eminent names; but there are some whose only claim to election rested upon the fact either of their having hovered about art and science long enough to speak with an affectation of enthusiastic admiration upon their manifold beauties and wonders, or upon the possession of a title and fortune which enabled them to purchase the right of mixing on an equality with their superiors. We have no desire to know the names of those twenty gentlemen who, whilst professing a love of art, would willingly assist in ostracising an artist; but we have little hesitation in hazarding an assertion that the whole of them will be found in one of the two classes of pretenders we have just described. A club thus constituted should be careful of drawing public attention to it more than is absolutely necessary; or it may become a question, on the admission of a man of real eminence into this exclusive assemblage, on whose side the honour lies. The veriest snob in England cannot ignore the fact that music is every year obtaining a deeper hold of public sympathy—is slowly, but surely, asserting its place amongst those arts and sciences which refine and ennoble the human race. The unanimous election of Mr. Costa into the Athenæum Club would have been a graceful recognition of this fact from a body of men who are, at least professedly, devoted to the intellectual advancement of the people. True, he has been admitted, in spite of his twenty opponents; but not in a manner particularly agreeable to the feelings of a sensitive artist. It has been said that Sir George Smart was elected a member of the Club, not as a musician, but as a knight; let us hope for the time when a titled professor may be elected, not as a knight, but as a musician.

#### MR. JOSEPH BARNBY'S CHOIR.

THE third Subscription Concert, which took place at St. James's Hall on the 22nd ult., was a severe test to this Choir, every piece being given without instrumental accompaniment. The rapid improvement of so large a body of vocalists speaks forcibly in favour of the method of training pursued by Mr. Barnby; for all who have had the conduct of a choir know how difficult it is to combine power with purity of tone, and to increase in numbers without diminishing in delicacy and precision. Amongst the part-songs entitled to the highest praise for execution were Mr. G. A. Macfarren's little gem "The Three Fishers"—a setting of Kingsley's beautiful words so thoroughly sympathetic with the poetry as to elicit an universal encore—Mr. Joseph Barnby's well-known "Sweet and low"—also most deservedly re-demanded—H. Leslie's madrigal, "My love is fair," and Mendelssohn's eight-part Psalm, "Judge me, O God," which narrowly escaped the same compliment. These were given with so much feeling, refinement, and vigour as to delight all hearers; the gradations of tone being duly observed, without the slightest attempt to produce sensational effects. A new part-song, "Oh my love's like the red red rose," by Dr. Garrett, was also highly effective; and Mr. Walter Macfarren's "Spring" is another welcome addition to the rapidly increasing store of modern part-

music. Miss Agnes Zimmermann's "Good Morrow," Mr. Henry Lahee's "All ye woods," Mrs. Mounsey Bartholomew's "Golden Age," Mr. Henry Smart's "Curfew" (one of the most characteristic of his part-songs), Benedict's "Old May-day," and Miss Macirone's "Sir Knight, Sir Knight," were also included in the programme, and received with the utmost favour. Mr. Sims Reeves was in excellent voice, and delighted all Beethoven lovers by his exquisite rendering of the "Lieder Kreis," a circle of songs unequalled in the whole range of tender and impassioned vocal music. He also gave Mendelssohn's simple and charmingly melodious song "To the absent one;" and as if to show how violent can be the contrasts in art, he afterwards declaimed with stentorian power a patriotic effusion (with chorus) called "England yet," the composition of Mr. Benedict, who has certainly done better things, and most assuredly will never do worse. Madame Patey-Whytock gave an elegant song, by Mr. Joseph Barnby (accompanied by the composer), called "The wrecked hope," which was unanimously encored; and she also sang Moore's "Meeting of the Waters," with the truest feeling for the beauty both of the melody and the words. Mr. Willem Coenen gave a dashing and effective rendering of Chopin's Polonaise in E flat on the pianoforte, and also two of his own compositions, receiving after each performance the most enthusiastic applause. The pianoforte accompaniments to the solo vocal music were played by Mr. Benedict with the care and finish of a thorough artist; and Mr. Joseph Barnby conducted with his usual steadiness and precision.

#### MR. HENRY LESLIE'S CONCERTS.

THE performance of Handel's *Acis and Galatea* was an interesting feature in the Concert of the 26th March. Mr. Leslie's admirable choir has so often covered itself with glory during the present season that it can afford to be told that the choruses in Handel's *Serenata* were not given in that irreproachable manner which we have so often remarked upon; and indeed we may add that the orchestra seemed occasionally strangely at fault, as if indeed the performers were trying over their parts at rehearsal, to see if they agreed. The fine chorus, "Wretched lovers," was, however, given with excellent effect; and the perfect manner in which the conductor can control the tone of his choir was especially observable in "Mourn, all ye Muses," which was in every respect a thoroughly successful performance. The principal vocalists were Madame Lemmens-Sherrington, Mr. W. H. Cummings, Mr. Vernon Rigby, and Mr. Santley, all of whom we need scarcely say fully sustained their reputation; Mr. Santley, as usual, receiving an unanimous encore for his magnificent rendering of "O ruddier than the cherry," which he has now completely made his own. Whatever shortcomings may have been observable in the choral portions of *Acis and Galatea*, there can be little doubt that ample amends was made for them in Mendelssohn's eight-part Psalm "Judge me, O God," which was given so finely as to be unanimously re-demanded. The choir had also ample opportunity of proving its true strength in the "Sanctus" from Bach's Mass in B minor, and the "Kyrie" from Schubert's Mass in E flat, the former especially, in spite of its immense difficulty, being sung with the utmost truth and precision. At the next Concert, in addition to a very excellent selection of choral music, all of which was given with much effect, Mr. Leslie had secured the services of Mr. Charles Hallé, who played Beethoven's "Sonata Pastorale" in his usual admirable manner; and on Monday, the 6th ult., an extra Concert was given, the programme of which was entirely composed of sacred music.

#### CRYSTAL PALACE.

A PERFORMANCE of Mendelssohn's music to *Edipus* has been amongst the most noticeable features of the Saturday Concerts at this establishment. The composition was given with the care and finish to which Mr. Manns has now thoroughly accustomed his audience. The last